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GRAFTON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT EARNS NASA SCHOLARSHIP

Jessica Wignall, a graduating senior at Grafton High School, is one of five students nationwide to receive a 2004-2005 NASA Scholarship.

The scholarship is worth \$2,000, renewable annually for a maximum of \$8,000 over six calendar years.

Wignall is the stepdaughter of Steven X.S. Bauer, an employee in NASA Langley Research Center's Configuration Aerodynamics Branch. Her mother, Carol Bauer, is a teacher at Grafton Bethel Elementary School.

Wignall learned of the award two weeks ago. "I was really excited," she said. "Relieved."

Karl G. Schuler, president of the NASA College Scholarship Fund, said there was an "extraordinary" response rate this year. Eighty students applied.

"All the applicants are to be commended for their remarkable achievements," Schuler said. "They have exceedingly high grade point averages, exceptional SAT scores, and are actively involved in their communities, making the final selection very difficult."



NASA Langley Research Center Director Roy D. Bridges Jr. presents a NASA Scholarship award plaque to Jessica Wignall. She plans to study biology at the University of Virginia.

Photo by Jeff Caplan

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Wignall scored 1530 on the SAT and will graduate third in her class. Her resume includes leadership roles in the Student Council Association, the Mu Alpha Theta honor society, Model United Nations and Students Against Destructive Decisions. She volunteers at local nursing homes and soup kitchens and also completed a mentorship in the pathology lab at the Mary Immaculate Hospital through the New Horizons Governor's School for Science and Technology.

She was accepted at Virginia Tech and the College of William and Mary but will attend the University of Virginia to study biology. She plans to attend graduate school and hopes to work as a biological researcher.

"I'd like to be important in some way," she said. "I'd like to discover something beneficial."

The NASA Scholarship Fund, Inc., is a non-profit corporation established in 1982 to award academic scholarships to qualified dependents of NASA employees and is a direct result of a substantial unsolicited gift by noted Pulitzer Prize-winning author James A. Michener. There have been a total of 114 recipients of the scholarship to date.

A high-resolution photo of Wignall accepting the award is available online at:

http://oea.larc.nasa.gov/news_rels/2004/04-037.html